



The old correspondent is back from the wars, my fingers itching for a typewriter because it just seems I've got so much to write about. It just doesn't seem to be a very dull life. I dashed over to Saipan Wednesday with High Commissioner Ed Johnston because I had rumors that there was going to be some "action" by the "revolutionaries" when Johnston returned. I didn't know quite what to expect. Maybe Dan Muna, Ben Santos, Mayor Sablan, and Eddie Pangelinan stretched out together on the runway. But that doesn't sound like too much fun, what with that 727, it could leave some interesting tire marks on your back.

Anyway, the voices of reason prevailed. The Saipanese decided that if anything at all disrupted Johnston's arrival, or the peace of the island, then certainly Ambassador Kennedy wouldn't make an appearance, and they did want to plead their case to such a high level personage. It was pretty evident that T.T. officials had got the same tip as I did, and as we roared down the runway you could see police standing by jeeps all over the place. One T.T. official pooh-poohed this later, saying "we always have police along the runway when a plane lands." True, true. But not that many.

The High Commissioner was very friendly, and invited me to attend the reception he was having the next day for Ambassador Kennedy. However, when my story came out in the next morning's Daily News, referring to him as "a symbol of repression", I got the impression that I wasn't really all that welcome.

In fact I had a funny scene at the airport, awaiting Ambassador Kennedy's arrival. Being the only bona fide member of the working press from off-island, I walked on the apron, talking to Phil Yates, Continental's genial manager. A few minutes later Nieman Craley, the T.T.'s public affairs officer, came up and asked me to get behind the fence. I sort of assumed that newspapermen are supposed to be where the action is. At least it's that way the world over, Saipan excluded. I asked Craley if he was going to throw me off the ramp physically, and he replied: "I will if I have to." He explained that he was "in charge" of the press, and it was for "security" reasons I was being expelled. I had better treatment at the Guam International Airport when President Nixon arrived—but then Guam isn't Saipan, and I guess that's what the hollering is all about.

Incidentally, many of the people on Saipan just assumed that Ambassador Kennedy was a part of the Kennedy family (JFK), and were a little disappointed to find out otherwise. The Ambassador really didn't spend much time talking to the people. He had a half hour session with the Marianas delegation—just enough time for them to tell him that they wanted out of the Trusteeship, they wanted to form a Commonwealth of the Marianas, they wanted the "favored nation" clause removed so that Japanese capital could come in, they wanted the military to either use the land they now have (a quarter of Saipan) or give it back, and they wanted Johnston's head (figuratively). Incidentally, I have a copy of the resolution passed by the Saipan legislation, unanimously passed, which is almost identical in wording to that of the Marianas district legislation, except it goes a bit further, even asking for his removal. Needless to say, the HiCom wasn't exactly enthusiastic about this. While I agree in principle with most of the Marianas leaders on the other points of their program, I'm not really in accord with bit about Johnston. Ed has, in my opinion, doing a pretty credible job under some pretty hand tying circumstances. He's smart, articulate, and knows as many of the politicians in Washington as anybody.

I'm afraid, though, for the Saipanese, Johnston is just the symbol of the yoke of the T.T. that they want removed. Any other man in the same job would get the same treatment from them.

We're convinced that the Saipanese are truly pro-American—if the reception I got was any indication. I felt like a long lost son. Guys like Herman Guerrero, Ben Santos, Vicente Cainacho, Dan Muna, Ed Pangelinan, Phil Atalig, the Mayor, or Manny Muna go out of their way to be helpful and friendly.

Many of these men will be going back to Washington this week to try to present their case (as well as the war claims) to official Washington. I sort of wish there was something the people of Guam could do to ease their burden on the trip, or to assist them in some way. I don't know what form this could take, perhaps some letter writing to Congressmen, or something.

Howard Bowie, manager of the always pleasant Royal Taga, said that the fire at the Congress of Micronesia, plus the "threats" of violence caused more than a hundred cancellations at the hotel—mostly by Guam people who figured they didn't want to vacation in the midst of a "revolution". It didn't bother the Japanese though, who don't read the English newspapers and didn't know any action was expected. Things have pretty well returned to normal again, though, so if you're planning a trip to Saipan, don't fear, tell them Joe sent you. Saipan is always a joy. That lagoon's the greatest, blue, and great for water skiing. There were a good many tourists over there, including some of the Sierra Club people who were really impressed with the beauties, the climate, and the people.

Here I am at the end of the sheet and I haven't said anything about the great Las Vegas night at the Whispering Palms, or the fantastic opening of the Dai-Ichi Hotel, or a report on Pete Ada's trip around the world. Well, I'll give you something to do tomorrow

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